

# Columbia/Snake River Mainstem TMDL

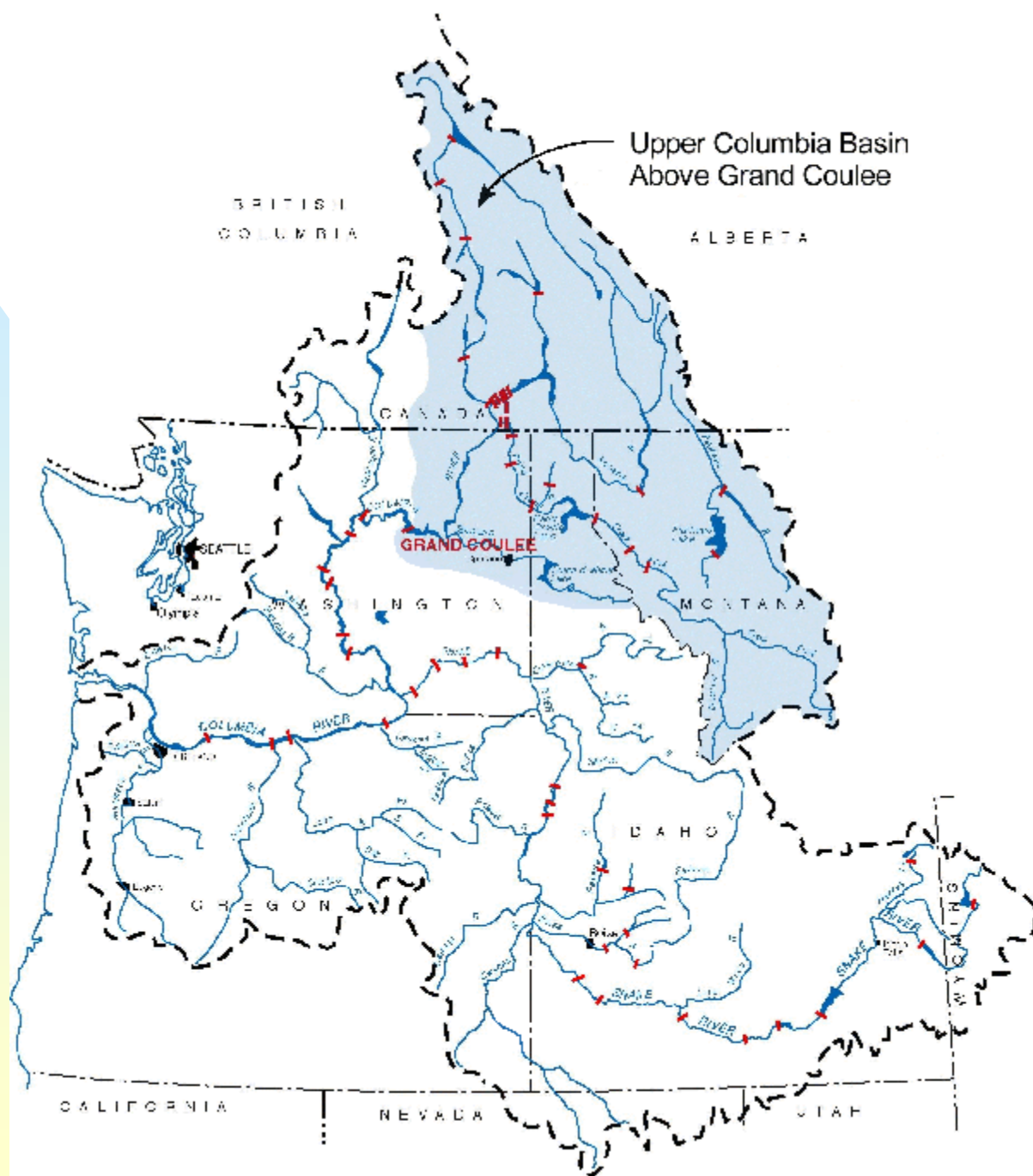
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**Presentation to the RA Meeting**  
**U.S. Environmental Protection Agency**  
**April 18, 2002**



# Columbia Basin

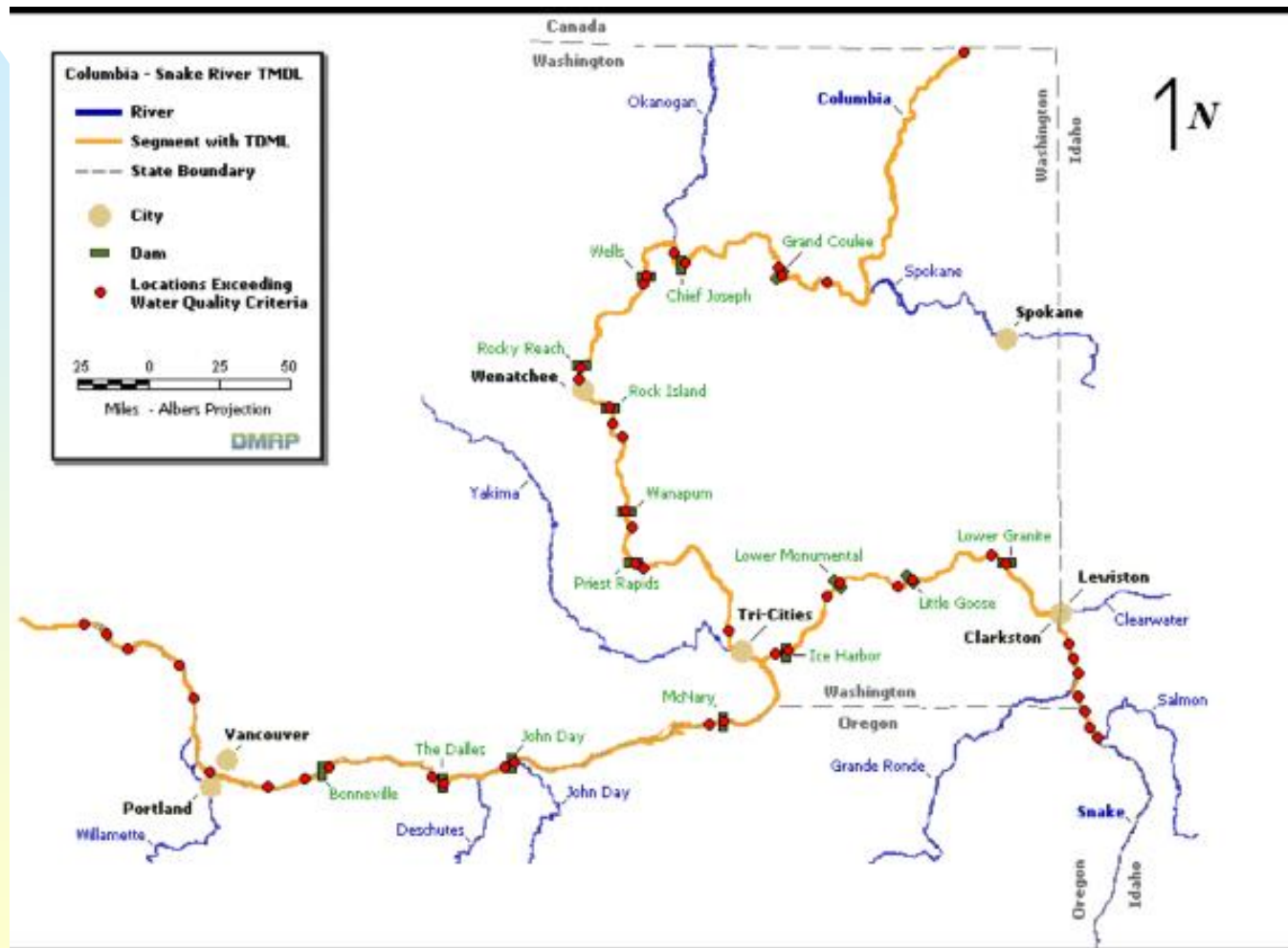
- 259,000 Square Miles
- Two Countries
- Six States and 1 Province
- Thirteen Indian Tribes



# Geographic Scope of the TMDL

- Columbia River from the Canadian Border (River Mile 745) to the Pacific Ocean
- Snake River from the Salmon River (River Mile 188) to the Columbia River (Columbia River Mile 324)
- Over Nine Hundred River Miles

# Geographic Scope



# TMDLs Under this Effort

- Columbia/Snake River Mainstem Temperature TMDL
- Lower Columbia River Total Dissolved Gas TMDL
- Mid-Columbia/Lower Snake River Total Dissolved Gas TMDL
- Lake Roosevelt/Upper Columbia Total Dissolved Gas TMDL

# Other Related Activities

- 2000 Federal Columbia Power System Biological Opinion under the Endangered Species Act
  - Water Quality Reasonable and Prudent Alternatives
  - Water Quality Plan

# Sometimes Conflicting Benefits of Managing the River

Hydroelectric Power

- 10 Federal Dams
- 5 Public Utility District Dams

Flood Control

Irrigation

Navigation



# Sometimes Conflicting Benefits of Managing the River

Domestic and Industrial Water Supply

Wastewater Transport

Sport and Commercial Salmon Fisheries

Broad Based Recreational Industry

Tribal Cultural and Religious Importance

Tribal Subsistence and Commercial uses

# Agencies with a Role in Managing the Columbia River

## Federal Columbia River Power System

- Bonneville Power Administration
- Corps of Engineers
- Bureau of Reclamation

## Columbia Basin Irrigation Project

- Bureau of Reclamation
- Columbia Basin Irrigation Districts

# Agencies with a Role in Managing the River

## Endangered Species Act

- National Marine Fisheries Service
- Fish and Wildlife Service
- Fish and Game Departments from 4 states and 13 tribes

# Agencies with a Role in Managing the River

## Clean Water Act

- Environmental Protection Agency
- Idaho Department of Environmental Quality
- Oregon Department of Environmental Quality
- Montana Department of Environmental Quality
- Washington Department of Ecology
- The Confederated Tribes of the Colville Res
- The Spokane Tribe of Indians

# Federal Execs and Federal Caucus

Ten Agencies with roles in Managing the Columbia Basin Ecosystem:

NMFS

FWS

FS

BLM

BIA

NRCS

BPA

Corps

BoR

EPA

# Federal Execs and Federal Caucus

- The Fed Execs groups consists of Agency Heads
- The Fed Caucus consists of Senior Policy Staff
- Purpose is to coordinate efforts among the agencies managing the Columbia Basin Ecosystem.
- Both groups meet as needed
  - During discussions on the ESA BIOP for Salmon the Execs met about every two weeks and the Caucus met weekly

# International Agencies with a role in Managing the River

- Environment Canada
- Fisheries and Oceans Canada
- B.C. Ministry of Environment
- B.C. Hydro

# Interest Groups Actively Following the Project

Pulp and Paper Industry

Aluminum Industry

Federal Columbia River Power System

Public and Private Utilities

Irrigation Districts

Municipalities

B.C. Hydro



# Obstacle to Progress

Disagreement among all of these entities on the

- cause of Salmon decline;
  - the existing condition of water quality;
  - the causes of water quality impairment; and
  - the management direction necessary to restore salmon and restore water quality in the river.
- “We don’t agree on solutions to the problem because we can’t agree on what the problem is.”

# EPA's Goal in Leading the TMDL Process

Develop the scientific tools and information necessary to make informed decisions on the management of the river to restore salmon and water quality while protecting the economic vitality and social values of the region.

We are using the TMDL process to quantify the water quality problems in the river, to give context to the debate on how to manage the river.

EPA's value added, through the TMDL process, is to remove the obstacles to progress by

- quantifying the existing condition of water quality;
- the causes and sources of impairment;
- the reductions in loading by the different sources needed to meet WQS.

# Coordination Efforts

## TMDL Policy Committee

- EPA, NMFS, Region 10 States, Tribes
- Meets monthly
- Federal Dam Operators and PUDs often attend

## TMDL Technical Team

EPA, Region 10 States and Tribes

Meets as needed

# Consultation and Coordination with Tribes

Two letters to the 13 Tribes committing to formal consultation and notifying them of the opportunity to consult.

A Grant to the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation to plan and Implement Tribal Coordination

Two Tribal workshops for all Columbia River Tribes to share information and receive feedback

Numerous individual meetings with interested Tribes.

# Public Involvement

- Seven Public Workshops to share information and receive feed back;
- Monthly updates at the NMFS Water Quality Team Meetings;
- TMDL Web Page;
- Six Fact Sheets

# Public Involvement

- Numerous Individual Meetings with Interest Groups
  - Federal Columbia River Power System;
  - Public Utility Districts;
  - Pulp and Paper Industry
  - Irrigation Districts
  - Watershed Council
  - Congressional Delegations

# For more information

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- **Region 10 Home Page**  
[www.epa.gov/r10earth/index.htm](http://www.epa.gov/r10earth/index.htm)
- **Columbia/Snake Rivers TMDL Web Page**  
[www.epa.gov/r10earth/columbiainstemtmdl.htm](http://www.epa.gov/r10earth/columbiainstemtmdl.htm)
- **Office of Water TMDL Home Page**  
[www.epa.gov/OWOW/tmdl/index.html](http://www.epa.gov/OWOW/tmdl/index.html)

